

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

System and method for determining expiration of a timestamp using a counter. Upon the occurrence of a first event, a time value derived from a binary counter with a length N is associated with the first event. At a later second time value derived from a binary counter with length N, the first time value is checked for expiration with respect to an expiration period. The second time value is summed with a predetermined offset value and the sum formatted as a number with length $N + 2$. The first time value is subtracted from the sum and the two most significant bits are removed. The result is then compared to the expiration period to determine whether expiration has occurred.